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General Assembly

Fifty-third Session

Official Records

4th plenary meeting
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Corrigendum

Page 5, first column

At the end of the second complete paragraph, which begins "With over 1 billion people", insert the following text:

The United Nations has a duty to address it resolutely, with vision and determination. We can make a difference. I am convinced of that, and your deliberations over the next two days will help steer our work in the right direction. I wish you a very productive session.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): We will now give the floor to the speakers on our list. The first speaker is Mr. Ali Alatas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, who will also be speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Alatas (Indonesia): It is a distinct pleasure for me, in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, to extend sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the fifty-third session of the General Assembly. I am confident that under your able leadership this session of the General Assembly and this high-level meeting will be crowned with success.

Let me also express our sincere appreciation to the Deputy Secretary-General for gracing this meeting with her presence and participation.

We meet at a time when surging globalization, driven by technological change, and the rapid liberalization of trade and investment are changing economic processes all over the world. Unfortunately, globalization's promise of greater prosperity and widespread benefits for humankind is increasingly beclouded by uncertainties and the exposure of vulnerable economies to risks of devastation. The convening of this dialogue is therefore both timely and essential.

We cannot afford to ignore the formidable challenges and implications of globalization and their social and economic impact. We must address these challenges, and in doing so it would serve us well to be guided by the General Assembly resolutions on the renewal of the dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership. This means that the dialogue needs to be based on mutual interest and benefits and equitably shared responsibility, which form the essence of true partnership in genuine interdependence.

For five decades now, both the United Nations and the Group of 77 and China have endeavoured to promote development and to combat the problem of poverty. During that period the cause of development moved forward through multilateral cooperation, with the vigorous assistance of the United Nations and its agencies. Because of its

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near-universal membership that gives it a global reach and its comprehensive mandate that enables it to engage in a broad range of activities, the United Nations has been particularly effective in promoting international cooperation for development, in alleviating poverty and in working for a general improvement of the human condition.

It has also succeeded in broadening the concept of development itself, making it basically a process for raising the quality of life of all peoples and, as such, more relevant to the challenges of our time. Indeed, the common message of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the early 1990s was that for development to have any meaning at all it must be people-centred and people-driven. Moreover, its economic, social and environmental dimensions must be integrated with one another in such a way that not any one of them can be sacrificed in favour of any other. On the basis of this concept, the international community negotiated and adopted an Agenda for Development that restored the core issues of development to the heart of the United Nations activities. On the same basis, we are working to revitalize the United Nations in the social and economic fields so that it will remain a vital and effective instrument of international cooperation for development as we move into the new millennium.